Tactile

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by harleygirl2648

Summary

“Countess Erzsébet Báthory was said to have bathed in the blood of her victims,” Hannibal says he rubs a warm washcloth over Will’s sore neck, and Will tilts his head back and enjoys his ministrations as the hot water soothes his tired, adrenaline-shot muscles. “She believed that the blood would keep her young forever.”

“Please don’t suggest that as an activity for this weekend,” Will sighs, even as they both could hear the tease in his tone. Hannibal chuckled, making Will do the same before relaxing into the neck massage.

Notes

Enjoy a dose of fluff to kick your week off!

See the end of the work for more notes

Will breathed out a sigh of relief when he got back home as he remembered Hannibal would be out late tonight, and promptly headed right upstairs to the main bathroom to wash all the blood off.

It should be startling at how *normal* this has become. It should be more startling at how *calm* he feels. But he's moved past that a lifetime ago, and now, he's fully accepting of his becoming. And now he just needs to wash this blood off before it *really* sets, he thinks as he puts a stop in the bathtub and turns on the faucet.

The shirt he's wearing is a lost cause, the jeans are ripped beyond repair, so he just tossed them in the *very* back of his closet before sinking into a tub of hot, steamy water, letting his eyes close as his head hits the back edge of the tub.

He opened them again to watch the blood seep and spread in wicked tendrils in the water, lifting up his hand and observes the red fluid dripping down his wrist and down his arm. His eyes closed again and let a memory flood his senses.

"Countess Erzsébet Báthory was said to have bathed in the blood of her victims," Hannibal says he rubs a warm washcloth over Will's sore neck, and Will tilts his head back and enjoys his ministrations as the hot water soothes his tired, adrenaline-shot muscles. "She believed that the blood would keep her young forever."

"Please don't suggest that as an activity for this weekend," Will sighs, even as they both could hear the tease in his tone. Hannibal chuckled, making Will do the same before relaxing into the neck massage.

"Of course not. We already disposed of the remains, and besides, the human body only contains about 10 pints of blood. Considering the tub is holding about 95 gallons of water, acquiring that amount of blood would be cause for suspicion rather quickly."

"I've spent too much time with you," Will jokes. "Because that statement should startle me in the sense that you've obviously spent time calculating that particular scheme. Trying to keep us young forever? I always assumed that you would go the Dorian Gray route."

"An intriguing concept, and far more apt. The picture grow more grotesque as more sins are committed, yet the body retains an allure one cannot deny."

Will pauses, digesting this conversation before saying quietly. "I don't need immortality."

Hannibal also pauses in his movements. "You know if it were possible, I would grant it to you."

"I know. I don't need that, though."

"What do you need, Will?"

The sudden knock at the door made Will snort in surprise and open his eyes again. He wasn't asleep, honestly. He almost says that out loud, then thinks better of it when Hannibal's voice comes clearly through the door

"Are you alright, Will?"

"Yeah," Will muttered, then repeated himself, louder. "Yeah, I'm fine, sorry, was taking a bath. Be out in a minute."

He's sure that he heard Hannibal nod as soft footsteps leave him to his privacy. Will groaned as he stood up and dried off, too tired to dry off completely before sliding on an old T-shirt and boxers and then headed to the bathroom and crawled into bed. The fan was on full blast, sending a reflexive shiver down Will's spine when the cold air hit his skin. He was too tired to open his eyes, especially to actually get up and turn it off, but then a warm hand gently brushes the hair from his face before his favorite fleece blanket was draped over him.

"Thank you," he muttered, unable to say anything else before he finally surrendered to sleep. The last things he remembered before then were a soft kiss on the forehead, some muttered declaration of love, and the smell of dried blood.

It wasn't unusual to wake up in the mornings these days to the sound of a harpsichord playing, Will had come to discover. Nor was it exactly unpleasant, unless it had been a long night and the last thing you needed was an early awakening because your husband got *'inspired'* again.

It made Will smile this morning, however.

Usually he debated whether it was worth leaving the bed, but it seemed that his mind had already been made up before he had opened his eyes. He kept the blanket wrapped around himself as he braced himself for the coldness of the wooden floor as he made his way down to the study.

He leaned against the doorframe as he watched Hannibal's hands dance over the keys, the light streaming in the window through the sheer white curtains as a breeze caused them to almost dance in time to the music.

Something rises in Will's chest, a warmth he was still getting accustomed to after all this time.

Hannibal finished the song with a soft chord that required his fingers to stretch out over the keys and press down enough that the knuckles whiten. Only then does he turn and look at Will with a smile of his own. He knew that he had been standing there, they both knew this.

All of a sudden, Will felt *emboldened.*

He strode forward, stopping before Hannibal at the harpsichord bench and almost tastes the tension in the air. Will finally moved all the way so that he was sitting directly in Hannibal's lap, running his hands over his shoulders and kissing him slowly. He let out a sigh as Hannibal's hand slid up his back, one tangling in his mussed hair while the other pressed against his hipbone through the fleece of the blanket, then massaging up and down his spine with slow caresses as he returned the kiss.

It was tactile, palpable. *Real.*

It was still hard to believe sometimes.

Usually Will wasn't the one initiating like this. He would tease, that was more his style. But now...*now*-

"Will," Hannibal murmured against his lips, adjusting his seating position so they were both more comfortable. He was going to say something else, but Will stopped him with another kiss.

"I - I *need* you," he finally murmured back. He was ready to throw in a 'pretty please' for good measure when he let out a half-laugh as Hannibal used his leg push the bench farther back so that he could stand while still holding Will in his arms, kissing him again.

It's warm, the early sunlight is creeping in, and everything is wrapped in languid kisses and wandering hands and the feeling of fleece clutched tightly between fingers.

Hannibal turned his paper to page four, folding the opposite page down for easier access and passes it across the table to Will. Will finished nodding a thank-you to the waitress who brought their dinner drinks to the patio seating at their current favorite restaurant before picking up the paper, smiling at the article.

"He had his heart cut out and carefully tied to his arm in a *'heart on your sleeve'* pun and yet, you only made page four," Will teased, taking a sip of his drink. "Losing your touch?"

"I was waiting for the local elections to gain speed so they would take up more of the space in the paper," Hannibal responded, removing the cork from the wine bottle and pouring himself a drink. "I imagine making the front page would tip off the FBI."

"I'd say you were correct," Will agreed, raising his glass in a toast. "Thought, we have been officially dead for exactly one year today."

Hannibal clinks Will's glass before finally taking a sip, the smile difficult to hide. "A celebration indeed."

Will's smile grew a bit more devious as he folded the page back to the third, pushing it back towards Hannibal. Hannibal picked up the paper and read an article on a body found in the

woods about ten miles from their house, where the victim had been found missing more than half of his blood with the heart held in in clasped hands, like an offering.

Hannibal would have teared up if not for years of wearing a person suit. Instead of that, he looked at Will with an exceedingly fond expression.

“Beautiful, Will.”

“I would have made it more elaborate, but - well,” Will almost blushed, but instead ducked his head in an endearing way. “I - *really* like our house, I don’t want to move unless we have to.”

Hannibal reached out and took Will’s hand from across the table, stroking his thumb over the wedding ring. “I have no desire to leave this place, Will.”

“If you ever have to,” Will asked, almost hesitant. “Do you promise to take me with you?”

Hannibal squeezed his hand harder. “Of course, my love. Where else would I go if it is not with you?”

Will finally smiled again, squeezing Hannibal’s hand in return. “Thank you," he said softly.

As one last tease, he reached with his other hand under the table and lightly squeezed Hannibal’s thigh right before their dinner arrived.

Combined with heady eye contact and slow, deliberate bites of food, Will wasn’t going to argue when Hannibal refused an offer of dessert in order to simply pay the check and head back home.

Their home.

End Notes

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